

# News-SOCIAL Letter ACTION

Vol. XIV, No. 6

Indianapolis, Indiana

July - August, 1950

## Two Commissions Dissolved

At its regular meeting on June 21-22 the board of trustees of The United Christian Missionary Society approved the dissolution of the Commission on World Order and the Commission on the Church and Economic Life. Since the Commission on World Order is a joint creation of the Society and the International Convention the action taken was to propose to the Convention that the commission be dissolved. The Commission on the Church and Economic Life, being a creation of the Society, no such action was necessary. In both cases the action was taken upon the recommendation of the department of social welfare, to which both commissions have been attached.

In presenting the proposals to the board of trustees, James A. Crain, executive secretary of the department, pointed out that the Commission on World Order was established in 1943, to aid in planning the follow-up of the Delaware Conference on a Just and Durable Peace and in the expectation that peace treaties would be written immediately following the end of the war or shortly thereafter. Instead the postwar situation has developed into a stalemate in which conditions change from day to day and almost from hour to hour, so that world order can no longer be dealt with apart from the total program of the department. Much of the same situation has developed in the field of the church and economic life. In the postwar world issues cannot be separated and neatly packaged and assigned to separate commissions.

In addition, said Mr. Crain, other issues are arising which demand attention and which call for group consideration, among them the resolution on "Inclusion of all Races in Church Membership" which was referred to the department by the Centennial Convention at Cincinnati last year. The department is confronted, he said, with the problem either of setting up one commission competent to advise on all social issues or of constituting several commissions to deal with segments of the total problem.

Both the Commission on World Order and the Commission on the Church and Economic Life must of necessity deal with many issues beyond the limits of their assigned responsibilities. Thus both tend to become advisory on the total program of the department. It seems wiser, therefore, to dissolve the specialized commissions and to create a new commission with authority to deal with the total field of social issues.

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## Senators Seek Disarmament

Three resolutions calling for a world disarmament conference have been submitted to the Congress by some of the most distinguished statesmen in foreign affairs. Sen. Millard E. Tydings has introduced two, differing only in that the one asks that the conference be held under the auspices of the United Nations and the other that it be an *ad hoc* meeting called by the President of the United States. Sen. Brian McMahon, joined by six other Senators of both parties, has submitted a resolution asking for an immediate disarmament conference to be called by the United Nations.

Both of these gentlemen are on the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate; Mr. Tydings is chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and Mr. McMahon is chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy. They thus occupy top positions in our government in world affairs.

## German Student Project

About a year ago the U.S. Department of State gave its approval to a project of the Cultural Affairs Branch of the American Military Government in Germany for bringing carefully selected and screened German high school students to America for placement with American families for a year of schooling and experience in an American community. The purpose is to develop understanding and goodwill between these selected German youth and American youth and to give the visitors an opportunity to learn the ways of American life.

Cooperating with the State Department and the AMG, has been the Brethren Service Commission which has placed approximately 200 of these young people in Brethren homes throughout the United States. The project is now being opened to other communions which may wish to cooperate.

The arrangements are fairly simple. An American family agrees to receive one of these German students into the family, provide him (or her) with a home for a year, including room, food, clothing and other necessities, and to arrange for the student to attend the local high school. Only those who have a fair command of English are sent over, though in most cases there will be need for development of conversational English. In addition, the sponsoring family — or church group — puts up \$100 to cover cost of transportation from New York to the sponsor's home and return to New York at the expiration of the year. In many instances the project has been taken up by a church, a Sunday school class or a youth group, with one family furnishing the home, and the group helping to provide the \$100 for transportation, etc., and necessary clothing and pocket money. It is estimated that that total cost exclusive of board and room, which the student earns as a member of the family will run about \$200. All instructions emphasize the fact that

Let us seek to understand the minds of these men and then go on to analyze their proposals.

On Feb. 23, Mr. Tydings reviewed the policy of our government, as stated in *Readers Digest* (March 1950) by George F. Kennan, the top level policy advisor for the State Department, in which Mr. Kennan says that there are only three alternatives open to us: "(a) a return to isolation and armed neutrality; (b) war, or (c) to continue the policy of throwing our weight into the balance wherever there are relatively good chances that it will be effective in preventing the further expansion of international communism." These alternatives Mr. Tydings calls "mountainous in their defeatism," and he declares that "All imagination, energy, ingenuity, and diplomacy on the part of our Government and people are by such a policy completely and unmitigatingly discounted. They offer nothing but the ultimate expectation of the incineration of mankind."

There is a fourth alternative — not a sure way out of the impasse but one which would be criminal for us not to explore in all good faith and to the limit; namely, stop the arms race to certain suicide. Mr. McMahon supports this conclusion in saying (Feb. 2) that 5000 years of history teach us that such arms races end in war — and this time a war with hydrogen bombs.

## NO PEACE BY FEAR

The present policy of the Government is that of trying to prevent an open conflict with Russia by out-bidding her in the arms race. Both these Senators, among many others speaking today, believe this is certain to be futile in the end. There are many reasons for this, in addition to the testimony of history just noted. But two need special emphasis. The first was discussed in the June issue of this *NEWSLETTER* ("Two Worlds - or Three?"). It is that the position of the Russians and their allies appear to grow relatively stronger rather than weaker. The second has also been discussed in these columns,

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## On Social Frontiers

*Less Drinking?* Americans apparently are doing slightly less drinking, according to figures released by the Department of Commerce on June 23. In 1949, the total outlay for alcoholic beverages was \$8,550,000,000, a drop of \$250 million from 1948 and \$1,090,000,000 less than the postwar peak of \$9,640,000,000 in 1947. However, the 1949 consumption averaged \$57.50 for each man, woman and child in the U.S., or nearly \$90 for each person in the U.S., over 21 years of age. Almost a third of the cost went for taxes, the federal government alone receiving \$2,200,000,000.

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*Irving Park Church Does Something About It.* Irving Park Christian Church, Chicago, has shown how a local church may do something about international affairs. In July 1949, taking advantage of Freedom and Democracy Sunday, the church put on four mid-week forum discussions under the leadership of Hal Ford, of the University of Chicago. He produced a mimeographed discussion guide dealing with American Power Politics, Russian Power Politics, the Nature of the Cold War, and the Nature of Things to Come.

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*"Main Street."* This is the striking title that the Travelers Insurance Companies of Hartford, Conn., give to the 1950 Travelers book of street and highway accident data. Fatalities resulting from motor vehicles numbered 31,800 in 1949, as against 32,200 in 1948. Injuries numbered 1,564,000 in 1949, as compared with 1,471,000 in 1948. The 1949 death toll included 10,540 from automobile collisions, 9,350 from collisions with pedestrians, 6,450 deaths not from collisions, 3,120 due to collision of car with a fixed object, and 2,250 involving collision with trains, street cars, bicycles or other vehicles. Of the 1,564,000 injured, 943,000 resulted from automobile collisions, 269,000 were pedestrians, and 109,500 involved collision of the car with a fixed object. The break down of accident statistics shows clearly that most of the accidents were of a type that is characteristic of drinking.

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*Wars Are Fought Against Children.* It is in the nature of things that children can never win a war — and it is in the nature of things that all wars are fought against children. Some weapons are aimed at them directly — and children lose their lives, their eyesight, their arms and legs and mental faculties, just as if they were soldiers. These are only some of the victims, for, finally, every weapon has the same target. The mere existence of a tank or a gun means that there are fewer hoes, scythes and tractors — less food for children. Even before the guns start firing, the arithmetic of war deprives the children of their natural providers. When the shooting is over, it is not the dead who count their dead, for it is the children who reckon their losses, and finally pay the tragic reckoning for all the wars. — *UNESCO Courier*

## Summer Study and Service Projects

Each summer a number of Disciple ministers and young people engage in projects of study and service beyond their regular vocations.

In the June issue of *Social Action News-Letter* was listed the names of eleven young people who are spending the summer working with agricultural migrants in Minnesota, North Dakota, Illinois and Michigan. Mrs. Ruth Estes Milner, of the department of Social Welfare, attended the training camp at St. Joseph, Michigan, where she welcomed them and helped them plan for their summer work. They will be under the direction of the Home Missions Council of North America and will be jointly supported by the Council and the department of Social Welfare.

Vern Rossman, of Yale University, a candidate for the mission field, is spending his second summer at Flanner House, Indianapolis, under a grant from the department of Social Welfare. Mr. Rossman is gathering facts, figures and other valuable information relative to the self-help housing program being carried on by Flanner Homes, Inc. It is expected that this information will be of great value to other projects of a similar nature planned for the future.

Also at Flanner House this summer, working with the Herman G. Morgan Health Center, is Miss Betty Marie Ellis, likewise under appointment for the foreign mission field. Miss Ellis, who is a graduate in public health education, will spend the summer bringing Negro families in the area into contact with the Morgan Health Center and helping them to take advantage of the opportunities it offers. Tuberculosis is rife among the population which the Center serves and Miss Ellis' service in bringing together the Center and the people is one of great value.

At the Summer School on the Church and Economic Life at the University of Chicago, June 29—July 26, are James H. Behler, pastor of the Central Avenue Christian Church, Parsons, Kansas, Gilbert Weidman, pastor First Christian Church, Quincy, Illinois, T. W. Simer, pastor First Christian Church, Harvey, Illinois, and Charles Henry Cook, student in Phillips Bible College, Enid, Oklahoma, and Frank M. Marler, pastor Christian Church at Coggon, Iowa.

Granted scholarships to attend the Interdenominational Institutes on Racial and Cultural Relations at Eden Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., are the following: Raymond E. Brown, Hannibal, Mo., Charles E. Dietze, Henderson, Ky., S. S. Myers, Kansas City, Norman E. Stacey, Oklahoma City, Carl H. Wilhelm, Chicago Heights, and Tom Underwood of St. Louis. Chester A. Sillars, Danbury, Conn. and C. L. Whitfield, Baltimore, Md., will attend the same courses given at Lincoln Seminary, Lincoln University, Pennsylvania.

## Community Intangibles

Out of eyes set in a tear-stained face a thin little 13-year-old boy stared at the unresponsive walls of a juvenile court room. Bitter grief was gnawing at his heart. His mother whom he loved devotedly had failed to keep her promise to him that they would go together to see a night ball game in the city. It wasn't just the broken promise that made the tragedy, rather the broken promise was the culmination of a whole series of tragic events in the life story of this lad and his mother — father and mother separated — mother's remarriage — another separation — residence changed from one state to another — foster home care — inadequate finances — breaking into a warehouse — juvenile court — a hardened disillusioned mother who brushed off her responsibility with "I don't know what I'd do with him. . . ." The foster mother summed up the whole pitiful story when she said, "There's only one thing wrong with that boy, he's crazy about his mother."

In another case the judge in a criminal court had to decide whether the 17-year-old boy was a "different" boy — whether he really had repented his part in a vicious robbery in which a defenseless 52-year-old woman was slugged mercilessly with a gun butt. A young minister who has been trying for a year to rehabilitate the lad says that he is sincerely repentant, that he attends church regularly, and that "it would be the same as killing him" to send him to the state reformatory after these months of trying to be a "different" boy.

But on the other side of the picture are his parents — parents whose attitude is anti-social, who feel that their boy is "misunderstood" and is "not really bad at all;" whose lack of cooperation has been a handicap in the minister's effort to rehabilitate the boy. Court probation workers and investigators have backed up the minister's claim that Johnny is a boy worth saving.

"Few young offenders really are reformed in our penal institutions," reasoned the judge, "and if I send him away there is a strong chance he will come out bitter, resentful, potentially more dangerous than he was before. But suppose I put him on probation and he doesn't make good or perhaps kills someone the next time?" — the judge had to make a decision!

These two lads in their present state are products of a social illness in the communities from which they come. Well may we ask, "Are we going to continue to be concerned *only* with the treatment of the disease or are we going to make an effort to correct the conditions which produce maladjusted lives?" Courts can't order the intangible things that are needed. That kind of help comes from some source higher than the courts.

## Two Commissions Dissolved

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He therefore recommended to the trustees that the department be authorized to recommend plans and personnel for a single commission of from 24 to 36 members, to be known as the Advisory Commission on Social Issues, or some similar title, which will be competent to give long range study to critical social issues with a view to developing policies and recommending lines of study and action. Its functions will not overlap or duplicate the work of either the Committee on Christian Service of the Home and State Missions Planning Council or the Curriculum Committee of the Division of Christian Education. Its purpose will more nearly parallel that of the Commission to Restudy the Disciples, since it will be seeking ways and means of bridging gulfs of which we are all aware and yet about which we do not always know what to do. The field of social issues is one that is highly controversial and in which feeling frequently runs high. Yet it is one in which no one can be sure that he has the answer and in which a high degree of patience, tact and forbearance is called for. It is proposed that the new commission approach its task in the spirit of humble investigation, recommending its findings to all Christians to the extent that they appear to have validity.

J.A.C.

## German Student Project

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the student is to live in the home as a member of the family, have his assigned chores, and in all respects to be treated as a family member.

Reports, both from the students and their sponsoring families, tell of most encouraging results. One pastor writes of the German girl student in his home, "She was a godsend in our home during the illness of my wife. She took over the duties of the home to the limit of her experience and did them without prompting. She is in demand as a speaker and singer . . . We would like to keep her but she will be valuable in Germany."

At the recent annual conference of the Church of the Brethren held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, a number of students and their sponsoring families were present. The unanimous expression both of students and sponsors, was that it was one of the most thrilling experiences of their lives. As one man put it, "There's going to be a lot of weeping in some of these families when the time comes for these kids to start back to Germany."

With the project being broadened to include other religious bodies requests for further information are already being received by the Department of Social Welfare of The United Christian Missionary Society, 222 South Downey Avenue. Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

J.A.C.

## Senators Seek Disarmament

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that the diversion of our limited human and economic resources to military armaments from the necessary economic rehabilitation of the world leaves half of the world's peoples in such economic hopelessness as to make them easy subjects for communist propaganda and endangers the economic stability of all other democratic nations.

"For a long while," says Senator Tydings, "I have realized that armies are not the answer to the settlement of international disputes."

The disaster of an armament race with atomic bombs and other weapons of mass destruction has been clearly seen by most of our national leaders. And serious effort has been made to find a way out. There is some ground for the statement, frequently made, that except for the Russian recalcitrance, we would have had international control. But one must note two things about this situation: (1) The impasse appears to be complete in the matter of agreement through the United Nations on control of atomic energy. The Russians rejected the majority position of the Atomic Energy Commission of the UN on two principal points: (1) we wanted international ownership and control of the whole atomic energy program from the mines to end product, and the Russians insisted on *national ownership*, on the ground that international control of such a potentially rich source of power by "capitalist" nations would work to the disadvantage of the "socialist" economies — meaning the communist nations; and (2) we wanted continuous inspection by an international agency of the whole atomic energy enterprise in whatever country, with violations punishable without power of veto, while the Russians wanted *periodic* inspections by such an agency, the activities of the agency not being subject to veto but the punishment for violations to remain a matter of "unanimous agreement."

Mr. Tydings points out, in his speech of Feb. 6, that there are two fatal flaws in the majority plan, even if the Russians had accepted it. The first flaw was our assumption that agreement on control of atomic weapons would give us real protection. Wars have been always fought in the past without atomic weapons. And if war should come, all controls would be off anyway and the war would quickly develop into an atomic war. The second fatal flaw is that our plan assumed that we can control war while neglecting conventional armaments. We must admit that the Russians have been more realistic in insisting that we must handle all weapons, atomic and otherwise, at the same time and in the same manner.

This is the premise of all the pending resolutions calling for a disarmament conference. "If it is logical to outlaw the atomic bomb, as I believe . . . it is then just as logical to outlaw the conventional bomb-

ing and all forms of warfare . . . We must have disarmament all the way down the line to rifles," says Mr. Tydings.

### CAN WE TRUST RUSSIA?

The crucial question is, from our point of view, can we trust Russia to agree to disarm and keep her promises? Doubtless from the Russian point of view it is whether the Western democracies can be likewise trusted in the same manner. As a matter of fact, neither could be trusted to make or keep such an agreement except in so far as each deems it in his own interest.

With this consideration the crucial question shifts to whether such disarmament is really in the interest of each party and whether, if so, each will be able to see the issue. These Senators labor to point out that certainly this action would be in the interest of all concerned. "I assume that the people of Russia, very much like the people of the United States, are anxious to survive, to stay alive, to try to make an end of warfare."

Senate Joint Resolution 94, the more important of the lot, being sponsored by seven Senators and submitted to the House (House Concurrent Resolution 216, 217, 218, and 219) by four distinguished members of that body, therefore calls upon the peoples of the world "to join in a great moral crusade for peace and freedom." Spelled out the resolution continues:

"That the Congress of the United States advocate and recommend an immediate special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations for the single purpose of stopping the armaments race by speedily agreement upon effective and enforceable disarmament and control covering conventional armaments, biological and chemical agents, and atomic and hydrogen bombs;

"Be it further RESOLVED, That the Congress of the United States, as tangible evidence of its good faith, pledge itself to appropriate and to make available to the United Nations — when an effective and enforceable system of world-wide disarmament and control takes effect — all sums which would otherwise have been spent upon weapons for a period of 5 years, such sums to be expended by the United Nations for peaceful development of atomic energy, technical assistance programs to underdeveloped areas, and general economic aid and assistance to all war-ravaged countries;

"Be it further RESOLVED, That the Congress of the United States call upon all other governments to make a like pledge, and therefore be it resolved that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to each United Nations delegate and also that copies be transmitted to the presiding officer of every national parliament, congress, and deliberative assembly throughout the world."